

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9854

USMISSION GENEVA

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AMCONSUL ISTANBUL

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C O N F I D E N T I A L ANKARA 5256

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E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: SNAR, TU, UN

SUBJECT: TURKISH OPIUM POPPY CONTROL PROGRAM

REF: A) ANKARA 5060 B) ANKARA 5109

THE FOLLOWING DEVELOPMENTS HAVE OCCURRED RECENTLY IN THE POPPY CONTROL PROGRAM:

A. CONTROL PROGRAM. PURCHASES OF POPPY STRAW BY THE TMO (SOIL PRODUCTS OFFICE) BEGAN JULY 1 AFTER ANNOUNCEMENT OF CEILING PRICES (REF B). NO DECREE HAVE YET BEEN ISSUED GIVING THE AUTHORIZED POPPY GROWING AREA FOR NEXT SEASON. GOT SOURCES EXPECT THAT NO RPT NO SIGNIFICANT ENLARGEMENT OF THE AREA WILL OCCUR. SPECIFICALLY, IT IS THOUGHT UNLIKELY THAT MALATYA PROVINCE WILL BE AUTHORIZED FOR POPPY CULTIVATION.

B. ALKALOID PLANT. IN RECENT CONVERSATIONS WITH MISSION OFFICER, GOT SOURCES SUGGESTED THAT THE "WATER PROCESS" IS FAVORED FOR THE PROPOSED ALKALOID PLANT. THIS PROCESS IS CONFIDENTIAL

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IN USE IN NORWAY AND SOME EASTERN BLOC COUNTRIES. AN

ALKALOID PLANT WITH A 20,000 TON ANNUAL CAPACITY APPEARS FAVORED.

C. UNITED NATIONS ACTIVITIES. JUNE 26-JULY 4, THE "COMPASS TRIP" TEAM OF UN CONSULTANTS VISITED ANKARA FOR DISCUSSIONS WITH GOT REGARDING USE OF AERIAL RECONNAISSANCE TO SPOT UNLICENSED POPPY GROWTH. STANLEY GREEN, ONE OF THE CONSULTANTS, BRIEFED MISSION NARCOTICS GROUPS ON THE COMPASS TRIP PROGRAM AND STATED HIS BELIEF THAT THE GOT IS INTERESTED IN THE SYSTEM. IF THE PROJECT IS APPROVED, THE CONSULTANTS WILL RETURN TO TURKEY TO TRAIN A TEAM OF 10-12 TURKISH NATIONAL TO MAINTAIN THE SYSTEM. JULY 2-4, DR. STEN MARTENS AND OTHERS OF THE UN DIVISION OF NARCOTICS DRUGS VISITED ANKARA AND POPPY AREAS FOR DISCUSSIONS WITH GOT REGARDING UN NARCOTICS PROJECTS.

D. PRESS ACCOUNTS. LIBERAL MILLIYET ON JULY 2 CARRIES ON AN INSIDE PAGE A TRANSLATED ARTICLE SAID TO HAVE BEEN WRITTEN FOR THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR BY MS. LUCIA MUAT. THE MONITOR ARTICLE'S TITLE AS RE-TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH IS "AMERICA IS CLOSELY FOLLOWING TURKISH OPIUM." IN THE SAME ISSUE MILLIYET GIVES THE TEXT OF AN INTERVIEW BETWEEN PRIMIN SULEYMAN DEMIREL AND A CORRESPONDENT FOR THE FRENCH MAGAZINE PARIS-MATCH. ALTHOUGH THE INTERVIEW DEALS PRIMARILY WITH OTHER TURKISH-AMERICAN ISSUES, ON AN INSIDE PAGE DEMIREL RESPONDS TO ONE GENERAL QUESTION ON THE RESUMPTION OF POPPY CULTIVATION. DEMIREL IS QUOTED AS SAYING THAT POPPY CULTIVATION WAS AGAIN PERMITTED NOT ONLY FOR THE SAKE OF THE NATIONAL TREASURY, BUT BECAUSE OF THE POPPY'S CARIOUS BENEFITS TO THE TURKISH VILLAGER. DEMIREL STRESSED THAT THE NEW SYSTEM OF CONTROL, PARTICULARLY THE PROHIBITION ON INCISION, SHOULD MAKE SMUGGLING IMPOSSIBLE. ON JULY 4 POPULAR GUNAYDIN'S INSIDE PAGES CARRIED AN ARTICLE WITH COLOR PHOTOGRAPHS ON POPPY GROWING IN AFYON. UNDER THE CAPTION "THE OPIUM GROWER IS RUINED," THE ARTICLE'S LEAD PHOTOGRAPH SHOWS VILLAGERS IN A FIELD OF BLOOMING POPPIES. THE VILLAGERS ARE QUOTED AS SAYING, "THE STANDARD PRICE (FOR POPPY STRAW) MUST BE 30, NOT 21, LIRAS."

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